

Message Text

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70

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 SEC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 TRSE-00

EB-07 JUSE-00 L-02 SCA-01 /059 W

----- 102546

R 192300Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9390

INFO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 0702

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV CS

SUBJECT: EXCELSIOR RESPONDS TO CRITICISM OF VESCO'S YACHT

REF: SAN JOSE 0651

1. IN A PAGE 4 REPORT OF ITS FEB 19 EDITION, EXCELSIOR COUNTERED THE ACCUSATIONS MADE BY LA REPUBLICA, LAST WEEK THAT ROBERT VESCO'S SUMPTUOUS YACHT, THE "JOYA POCO" IS IN COSTA RICA WITHOUT HAVING PAID ANY DUES (SEE REFTEL).

2. EXCELSIOR'S STORY DISCOUNTED ANY ILLEGALITIES IN CONNECTION WITH THE YACHT BY STATING THAT THE "JOYA POCO" BELONGS TO A PANAMANIAN COMPANY "VINLEX, S.A., FLIES A PANAMANIAN FLAG, AND HAS ONLY BEEN DOCKED IN PUNTARENAS FOR "MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS". THE ARTICLE DID NOT FAIL TO POINT OUT THAT SUCH REPAIRS HAVE "INJECTED THOUSANDS OF COLONES" INTO PUNTARENAS. THE YACHT WAS DESCRIBED BY EXCELSIOR AS "NO DIFFERENT FROM ANY OTHER FOREIGN VESSEL THAT VISITS COSTA RICA FREQUENTLY AND REMAINS IN TERRITORIAL WATERS FOR DIFFERENT PERIODS OF TIME". AT NO TIME DID THE
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ARTICLE SAY THE "JOYA POCO" WAS OWNED, RENTED, OR USED

BY VESCO.

3. THE ARTICLE WENT ON TO POINT OUT TWO ERRORS IN LA REPUBLICA'S ORIGINAL STORY (BOTH MINOR, TECHNICAL POINTS) AND USED THESE ERRORS TO SHOW THAT SUCH "STORY-TELLING" ON THE PART OF THE NEWSPAPER COULD ONLY STEM FROM POLITICAL MOTIVES.

4. THE EMBASSY HAS LEARNED FROM NEWSMEN THAT THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE HAS ORDERED AN EMBARGO ON THE VESCO YACHT PENDING A DETERMINATION FROM THE COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE ABOUT THE YACHT'S TAX STATUS.
LANE

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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